

IT'S YOUR VOICE

Internal Newsletter of the Department of International
Relations and Cooperation

ubuntu diplomat



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Editor's Letter

Dear Diplomats,

March is Human Rights Month in South Africa and it is apt that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Solidarity Conference with the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)/Western Sahara was hosted in Pretoria in March. The conference followed a decision in August 2017, during the 37th Summit of the SADC Heads of State and Government, by all member states to host a conference to confirm the SADC region's solidarity with the people of the SADR. It was thus a reflection of SADC's support for the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 621 of 1998, which calls for a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara. It is important for the region's collective voice on the issue of the people of Western Sahara to be heard by the world, and thus upon the leaders to mobilise for the implementation of the resolution. Heads of State/Government from across SADC and Africa and special guests from likeminded countries gathered at OR Tambo Building from 25 to 26 March 2019 to further escalate solidarity.

Cyclone Idai arrived on the shores of the city of Beira in Mozambique in the beginning of March, which proceeded to affect Malawi and Zimbabwe, leaving devastation and despair in those three countries. The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu, embarked on a campaign to mobilise South Africa to lend a hand to our neighbours in their time of need. Minister Sisulu encouraged South Africans across the board – from NGOs, businesses and even individual citizens to assist the people of our neighbouring countries to begin the process of rebuilding their lives. The Minister's call was answered and she travelled to those affected areas to hand over the donations received.

The Diplomatic Training Research and Development (DTR&D) Branch hosted DIRCO's Second Conference of African Diplomatic Academies, Universities and Research Institutes Forum for African Diplomacy at OR Tambo Building this month. Following the resounding success of the first conference, the department decided to host the event annually to further move the department towards achieving its mandate as custodian of South Africa's foreign policy and international relations. The conference was well attended and we look forward to a third instalment.



As South Africa heads to the polls for the fifth time in the country's democratic government, our missions abroad will be hosting voting stations for South African citizens abroad on the 27 April, Freedom Day. May it be as peaceful and seamless a process as it has been previously and may it celebrate the sacrifices of those who fought for South Africa's freedom.

MM
Mathapelo Monaisa

The SADC Solidarity Conference with the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)/Western Sahara

by Mathapelo Monaisa

During the 37th Summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State and Government in August 2017, a decision was taken by all Member States to host a conference to confirm the SADC region's solidarity with the people of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)/Western Sahara.

From 25 – 26 March 2019, leaders from across the continent and like-minded states assembled, by invitation from the SADC Chair, President Hage Geingob of Namibia, at the OR Tambo Building, Pretoria to reflect commitment to the call for the right of the people of Western Sahara for self-determination in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations (UN) and applicable documents of the Organisation of the African Unity (OAU) and African Union (AU), as well as champion the implementation of the UN resolutions and OAU and AU decisions to allow the people of Western Sahara to exercise their right to self-determination.

The Conference commenced with a Ministerial Meeting co-chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, and Chair of the Council of Ministers, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah.

In her opening address as the host, International Relations and Cooperation Minister, Lindiwe Sisulu acknowledged the significant role played by the United Nations through the passing of resolutions aimed at raising the plight of the people of Saharawi, including a decision that the Conference was a clear demonstration of the region's international solidarity with the Saharawi people in their quest for self-determination.



The opening of the SADC Solidarity Conference Ministerial Preparatory Meeting, 25 March 2019

“It is this kind of solidarity and support for the people of Western Sahara that must give courage and impetus to their struggle for self-determination”, remarked Minister Sisulu. “Most of us here have attained our freedom, strengthened and assisted by the solidarity of people who cared about our plight. We knew that every country has an inalienable right to independence and self-determination,” she added.

The Meeting then proceeded into the Working Group Sessions to prepare statements to be delivered during Day two of the Conference. ▶



SADC Solidarity Conference

with the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)/Western Sahara

▶ **25 – 26 March 2019,**
Pretoria, South Africa

 [youtube.com/sadc.int](https://www.youtube.com/sadc.int)

 [sadc.int](https://www.facebook.com/sadc.int)

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[#SADCsaharawiSolidarity](https://www.instagram.com/SADC_Saharawi_Solidarity)



“...we are with the people of the Western Sahara. We stand with you, we support you, and we will never forget you.”

On Tuesday, 26 March 2019, South African President, Cyril Ramaphosa together and Namibia's President Hage Geingob, addressed the Conference, with a firm message to advocate for the urgent implementation of all the UN Security Council and AU decisions on Western Sahara, including the holding of a referendum.

President Cyril Ramaphosa thanked the delegates for responding to the invitation by SADC to deliberate on the way in which each participating nation can use its position with the United Nations and African Union to ensure the implementation of decisions taken during the Conference, so that a solution to the Western Sahara question can be achieved

“From the Southern African Development Community and our friends in the international community sends the clearest of messages, that we are with the people of the Western Sahara. We stand with you, we support you, and we will never forget you.” said President Ramaphosa.

The President further reminded the Conference of the shared experience of the fight for freedom by countries across the SADC region.

“As countries of the SADC region who have waged struggles in pursuit of our own liberation, we know too well the pain of being deprived of the right to be treated as full citizens in the land of one's birth.”

President Ramaphosa continued, “As lovers of peace and freedom – as men and women of conscience – let us step up our international solidarity efforts, in both word and deed, with the people of Western Sahara, with Polisario and with the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic.

“It was international solidarity that brought down the barbaric system of apartheid, and it is international solidarity that will see realised the foremost aspiration of the people of Western Sahara: to be independent and free.”

To further impact on the solidarity of the SADC region with the Saharawi people, President Geingob impressed on the Conference that the people of Africa were in the process of establishing “The Africa we Want” under our strategic framework for socio-economic transformation - Agenda 2063.

“These aspirations will not be achieved in the absence of total freedom of all Africa's people. The prolonged impasse on the Western Sahara issue will have grave consequences on the functioning of our Union.

“We can only move forward when freedom is guaranteed to all our citizens. As said by the revolutionary icon of Pan Africanism, Kwame Nkrumah, “Freedom is not something that one people can bestow on another as a gift. They claim it as their own and none can keep it from them.” said President Geingob.





1. *President Cyril Ramaphosa arrives at the Solidarity Conference*
2. *The plenary*
3. *Heads of State meet for the group photo*
4. *Minister Lindiwe Sisulu with Minister Nandi-Ndaitwah during the Ministerial Planning Session*
5. *Presidents Cyril Ramaphosa and Hage Geingob ahead of the Conference*
6. *President Cyril Ramaphosa with President of SADR, Mr Brahim Ghali*
7. *Deputy Minister Luwellyn Landers in conversation with the Saharawi Ambassador to South Africa, Mr R.S Bachir*
8. *Saharawi Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mohamed Ould-Salek Salem*

Minister Sisulu visits areas affected by Cyclone Idai

by Matheko Rametsi

In March 2019, the vicious Cyclone Idai hit Beira, the fourth largest city in Mozambique, it arrived in Malawi and continued its devastation in Zimbabwe leaving the three South African neighbours in a state of complete disaster. Following the aftermath of the destruction, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu called for humanitarian assistance from South African businesses, NGO's and individuals.

The minister's request received ample response as South Africa donated expeditiously and generously, anything from clothing, blankets, water purifiers, non-perishable food and even monetary funds, amongst many other donations.

In what has become an ongoing project, Minister Sisulu travelled to Mozambique and Zimbabwe to hand over donations to victims of Cyclone Idai.

On the 28 March 2019, Minister Sisulu visited the city of Beira in Mozambique and the Chimanimani District in eastern Zimbabwe to hand over the donations made by South African citizens, companies and members of the Diplomatic Corps. The Minister also met with rescue teams, including the South African National Defence Force, South African NGOs, United Nations Agencies and volunteers.

She was accompanied by members of the business community led by Patrice Motsepe, the founder and executive chairman of African Rainbow Minerals.



Minister Sisulu meets with Dr Imtiaz Sooliman and team from Gift of the Givers on arrival



Minister is welcomed by a team from the Zimbabwean Foreign Ministry at Robert Gabriel Mugabe Airport



Team SA rescue operations.



A CALL ON DIRCO OFFICIALS TO ASSIST NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY TROPICAL CYCLONE IDAI

International Relations and Cooperation Minister, Lindiwe Sisulu, is appealing to all DIRCO officials to make donations towards humanitarian aid for the **people of Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique** affected by Tropical Cyclone Idai.

According to reports, at least 100 people have lost their lives as a result of floods that have left 400 000 displaced and in urgent need of shelter, food and other amenities.

The following can be donated and placed in boxes placed in prominent areas around the DIRCO building:

- Food
- Clothing
- Blankets

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Lend a hand and help our neighbours!



#CycloneIdaiHumanitarian2019



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DIRCO hosts 2nd Conference of African Diplomatic Academies, Universities and Research Institutes Forum for African Diplomacy

by Anesh Maistry



The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) successfully hosted the second meeting of African Diplomatic Academies, Universities and Research Institutes from 19 to 20 March 2019 at the OR Tambo Building, under the theme: African Diplomacy in a State of Complex Uncertainty: Critical Threats, Leveraging Opportunities and Meeting Challenges through African Solutions.

The inaugural meeting was hosted by DIRCO in 2018 under the theme: African Diplomacy: Identity, Objectives, Realities and Futures in a Dynamic and Changing World. At this engagement it was recognised that there was a need to meet and consolidate the work of these continental institutions through knowledge generation that supports African states in their international engagements. Consequently, it was agreed that there was a need to formalise a platform where discourse around pertinent issues impacting African diplomatic practice could be engaged in. It was hoped that this could be achieved through:

- signing the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) formalising this engagement
- agreeing on a modality for the creation of a formalised African structure, namely the Forum for African Diplomacy.

During this year's conference, the following critical areas formed the basis of the discussions:

- o Unilateralism, Rising Nationalism and Militarisation of Foreign Policy in the Global Order: A Pan-African Response
- o The Global Economy and its Disruptors: African Responses for Growth Fourth Industrial Revolution
- o Current Trends in Teaching Diplomacy: Critical Competencies for a VUCA World.

The two-day forum was attended by eminent intellectuals, diplomatic practitioners and researchers from all over the continent. It also included senior heads and officials of diplomatic academies from the following countries: Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, Kenya, Burkina Faso, Western Sahara, Zambia and Zimbabwe. ►

One of the key outcomes of the conference was to encourage continental institutions to focus on skills development and competencies of our young diplomats through the development of research capacity for data collection and analysis, exploiting the opportunities presented by digital diplomacy and highlighting the need for self-learning.

Another area of importance is the need to start cooperating on harmonisation and codifying the successes and challenges of African diplomatic practice with the aim of developing a Handbook for the African Diplomat.

It was agreed that in the long term, the work of the forum would be linked to an appropriate platform within the African Union, however, for this to be a reality, there needs to be a critical mass of interested parties that are part of the conversation.

Finally, it was agreed that all participants will make a concerted effort at outreach in their respective countries to encourage all research institutes and universities to be part of this undertaking

In the main, this conference is the beginning of a broader and critical conversation in uniting African diplomatic practice and supporting the capacities of all African states to control the global narrative around African diplomacy.

The next conference will be hosted by one of the African partners in 2020 with a hope that it lays the foundation for a sustained effort to meeting regularly and also expanding the interface to broader civil society.



Mission Administration Training: A centre for Corporate Governance Management training

South African Foreign Missions are tasked amongst others with a mandate to promote and protect the interest of South Africa in the international community.

This role involves marketing and country branding which is pivotal for the South African brand for investment attraction, export marketing and tourism promotion. Achieving this requires support of a capable, efficient and capacitated administration.

The Directorate: Administration and Management Training (AMT) which is located within the Chief Directorate: Diplomatic Academy and International School is tasked with producing highly skilled and competent administrators who constitute the backbone of DIRCO operations both at Head Office and at Missions.

This is achieved through facilitating the training of Corporate Services Managers and Third Secretaries (Administration) aimed at equipping them with the necessary skills and aptitude to serve at South African missions abroad.

The directorate contributes to the achievement of objective of the Foreign Service Training Strategy that aims to ensure the advancement of diplomats who appreciate the developmental context and challenges facing South Africa and the African continent – diplomats who are guided and understand the goals and aspirations of Agenda 2063 as well as the mandate of the Chief Directorate: Diplomatic Academy and International School of providing and facilitating quality responsive training.



The Directorate offers various programmes, which includes:

Two qualifications registered on the National Qualification Framework of South African Qualification Authority.

- National Certificate: Mission Corporate Services Management (64330) at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 6 which presented to administration officials to prepare them as corporate services managers for foreign posting.
- National Certificate: Mission Administration (48761) NQF Level 5 which is offered to administration officials in order to prepare them to serve as third secretaries. These are the officials who are posted to support the work of the corporate services managers.

Three non-accredited programmes includes:

- Computer Application Training - these are practical and interactive on all the Microsoft applications and are offered throughout the year;
- Mission Pre-Posting Course - which is offered to corporate services managers and third secretaries who have been posted to a South African mission. This course is offered prior to their departure and contextualises the core functions of Corporate Services Management at the missions and good governance; and
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes are delivered in order to ensure that officials remain relevant and up-to-date with current trends, they are designed to update the skills of corporate services officials and third secretaries. These CPD programmes focuses on reskilling officials to be able to comply with policies, prescripts and essential information, which will be required when performing their functions.



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Appointment of Amb Saad Cachalia as SA's first Permanent Representative to IRENA

by Andre van de Venter

The Head of Mission in Abu Dhabi, Ambassador Saa'd Cachalia, presented credentials to the Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Adnan Z Amin, on 14 March 2019.

The appointment of Amb Cachalia as South Africa's first Permanent Representative (PR) to IRENA is the culmination of an accreditation process which started back in November 2016. A total of 51 countries have to date appointed PR's to the multilateral organisation which has its headquarters in the UAE capital.

IRENA currently has 160 member states with another 23 states in accession.

The PR appointed to IRENA will be a Member country's direct, on-the-ground liaison with the Agency in Abu Dhabi. With this, the Agency hopes to increase the frequency and quality of in-person communication between Members and the Secretariat, by complementing on-going communication with Member capitals and in between the Assembly and Council meetings of the Agency.

The engagement with PRs is being organised in various formats, such as 'IRENA Talks' between PRs and the Director-General, periodic briefings by Secretariat staff on institutional and programmatic matters, or events on renewable energy issues or on specific aspects of IRENA's programmatic work. The meetings aim to create a platform for knowledge exchange, to provide PRs with an opportunity to engage more closely on ongoing IRENA activities and initiatives, and to create a renewable energy community among diplomats in Abu Dhabi.

Director-General Adnan Z Amin will complete his term of duty in June 2019 and will be replaced by Francesco La Camera from Italy.

The Mission would like to thank all officials who played a role in getting Amb Cachalia accredited to IRENA.



Ambassador Saa'd CACHALIA, with the Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), H.E. Adnan Z Amin.

TIME FOR ...

DISCLOSURE



All SMS members are reminded that the **eDisclosure system is open from 1 – 30 April 2019**, where you will be able to capture your financial interests for the 2018/19 disclosure period.

In terms of the Public Service Regulations, 2016, an SMS member will be found guilty of misconduct and must be disciplined if they:

- fail to disclose
- fail to disclose on time (by 30 April)
- submit an incomplete disclosure
- submit false and inaccurate information.

Go to: <https://edisclosure.gov.za> to disclose.

Don't delay to submit your financial disclosure!

For assistance contact:

Ms SP Mahlaela X11531 or 073 001 2922
Mr ME Mabitsela X10213 or 079 964 7461



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27 April 2019 – Vote abroad

8 May 2019 – Vote in SA

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